

TO: Board Members

THROUGH: Jeff Walker, Executive Administrator
Robert E. Mace, Ph.D., P.G., Deputy Executive Administrator, Water Science & Conservation
Les Trobman, General Counsel

FROM: Cindy Ridgeway, Manager, Groundwater Availability Modeling

DATE: October 20, 2016

SUBJECT: Groundwater Availability Modeling Program Research and Modeling Contracts

ACTION REQUESTED

Consider authorizing the Executive Administrator to (a) negotiate and execute contracts for research in support of the Groundwater Availability Modeling Program and (b) transfer up to \$1,440,000 from the Water Assistance Fund to the Research and Planning Fund.

BACKGROUND

For the 2016 to 2017 biennium, the Groundwater Availability Modeling Program was budgeted \$1,440,000 (\$720,000 each fiscal year) to fund grants for projects in support of the program. On March 24, 2016, the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) authorized the Executive Administrator to publish in the *Texas Register* Requests for Qualifications for three projects listed below.

Proposed Research Projects for Groundwater Availability Modeling grants.

<u>Project 1.</u>	Conceptual model for extending the groundwater availability model for the Hill Country portion of the Trinity Aquifer (Estimated cost: \$355,000).
<u>Project 2.</u>	Identify the vulnerability of the major and minor aquifers of Texas to subsidence with regard to groundwater pumping (Estimated cost: \$285,000).
<u>Project 3.</u>	Update the existing groundwater availability model for the northern portion of Queen City, Sparta, and Carrizo-Wilcox aquifers (Estimated cost: \$800,000).

Our Mission

To provide leadership, information, education, and support for planning, financial assistance, and outreach for the conservation and responsible development of water for Texas

Board Members

Bech Bruun, Chairman | Kathleen Jackson, Board Member | Peter Lake, Board Member
Jeff Walker, Executive Administrator

KEY ISSUES

In response to the request for qualifications, the Contract Administration Division received a total of nine statements of qualifications on or before the 2:00 P.M., August 11, 2016, deadline. Statements of Qualifications were reviewed by TWDB staff who quantitatively evaluated the proposals according to a set list of criteria. Point totals were used to rank the applicants. Oral presentations were conducted for the top three candidates for Project 2 due to the very close rankings of the applicants. Based on the application reviews or oral presentations, staff identified the following top-ranked candidates:

Southwest Research Institute: Project 1 - conceptual model for extending the groundwater availability model for the Hill Country portion of the Trinity Aquifer, not to exceed \$355,000.

LRE Water, LLC: Project 2 - identify the vulnerability of the major and minor aquifers of Texas to subsidence with regard to groundwater pumping, not to exceed \$285,000.

GSI Environmental Incorporated: Project 3 - update the existing groundwater availability model for the northern portion of Queen City, Sparta, and Carrizo-Wilcox aquifers, not to exceed \$800,000.

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the Executive Administrator to negotiate and execute contracts with the above-named selected applicants. If contracts cannot be negotiated with the top-ranked candidate by March 31, 2017, or sooner, contract negotiations will proceed with the second-ranked candidate (Attachment). This recommendation also includes authorizing the transfer of up to \$1,440,000 from the Water Assistance Fund to the Research and Planning Fund from the remaining funds in fiscal years 2016 and 2017 for the Groundwater Availability Modeling Program.

Attachment: Summary of Recommendations

Attachment
Summary of Recommendations

Project 1: Conceptual model for extending the groundwater availability model for the Hill Country portion of the Trinity Aquifer, not to exceed \$355,000 from the Research and Planning Fund from funds in Fiscal Year 2017 for the Groundwater Availability Modeling Program.

Ranking of Applicants:
Southwest Research Institute
LBG-Guyton Associates

Project 2: Identify the vulnerability of the major and minor aquifers of Texas to subsidence with regard to groundwater pumping, not to exceed \$285,000 from the Research and Planning Fund from the funds in Fiscal Year 2017 for the Groundwater Availability Modeling Program.

Ranking of Applicants:
LRE Water, LLC
Southwest Research Institute
Michelle A. Sutherland LLC
Freese and Nichols, Inc.

Project 3: Update the existing groundwater availability model for the northern portion of Queen City, Sparta, and Carrizo-Wilcox aquifers, not to exceed \$800,000 (\$720,000 from the Research and Planning Fund from the funds in Fiscal Year 2016 for the Groundwater Availability Modeling Program and \$80,000 from the Research and Planning Fund in Fiscal Year 2017 for the Groundwater Availability Modeling Program).

Ranking of Applicants:
GSI Environmental Incorporated
INTERA, Incorporated
LBG-Guyton Associates

Study Duration: The duration of the studies will be negotiated with the contractor by TWDB staff.

Task and Expense Budget: Task budget and expense budgets will be negotiated with the contractor by TWDB staff.